

## M E R C A T O R :

O R,

## Commerce Retrieved,

B E I N G

CONSIDERATIONS on the State of the *British* Trade, &c.

From Tuesday, May 25. to Thursday, May 27. 1714.

*The Opposers weary of their Argument.**They would fain call another Cause.**The Reason of it.**They find their Cheats detected, and would fain avoid it.**A brief Sum of the Matter.**The Mercator's first using the Custom-house Accounts, and the Reason of it.**The same reconciled to what he says now.**Four Inferences drawn from the Discovery of the Cheat.**More to come.*

**T**HE Opposers of the Treaty of Commerce are frequently calling another Cause, because they are weary of hearing what they are, or ought to be ashamed of, without being able to give any Answer to it.

But as this Paper was begun to clear up the Clouds and Mists which a Set of Men for the propagating Party-Interests had spread before the Eyes of the People, and to disabuse and undeceive those, who they had imposed upon; so the *Mercator* cannot quit the Case in hand, till those People are yet farther inform'd, and made acquainted with the Scandalous Attempts made to cheat and abuse them.

When the Custom-house Accounts were first call'd upon to give a State of the Trade to France, the *Mercator* was very ready to appeal to them, not doubting but the abominable Frauds which had been discover'd to be in the first Schemes, which the Opposers had publish'd, would convince any well-meaning People, that they were imposed upon; Nor did the *Mercator* doubt, but referring to the Custom-house Books would bring the Matter to a full and true State.

And therefore the need not boast or value themselves upon it, that the *Mercator* first adhered to the Custom-house Books, and then declin'd them again, for this Subterfuge will stand them in no stead at all.

The Custom-house Books are right, and as far as they go, serve for every end they are call'd up to. 1. They evidently shew'd the

flagrant Cheat of the forged Scheme, which these People obtruded upon the World. They convicted them of a Cheat of 24000 l. and upward, in one Account, which they would have shuffled off, but could not, striving to lay their Bastard to the Door of the Inspector-General, but he appear'd against them in every Article. 2. The Custom-house Books owned the Quantities of Goods Exported, which they had subtilly left out, presuming that no such strict Inquisition should be made, as now we find necessary. Thus far we stand by the Custom-house Accounts, and as far as they could go, it is apparent they give a true Account. But when the *Mercator* came to examine the fraudulent Ballances these Pyrates of Accounts had drawn; and to look into the Custom-house Accounts for a true State of the Commerce, in order to bring a true Ballance to confront their false ones, it presently appear'd there was another Cheat in the Case, and we do not wonder that the Discovery has been provoking to these Men to the last degree, for it has blown up all their Ballances of Trade at once into the Air; the Case in short, for it is but a short Case, is this.

The Custom-house Accounts gave an Account, as far as they could; but there appear'd great Quantities of Goods which were sent from England to France every Year, nay, every Day, which never came into the Custom-house Books at all, and which therefore Commissioners of the Customs could give no Account of. From hence the *Mercator* infers, that

that the Custom-house Books could be no authentick Evidence of the Matter, nor could give any true Ballance of the Trade.

Having advanc'd this, the Enemy found it pinch'd them sorely, and to that purpose railed and raved mightily, made loud Exclamations, and threw dirt into the Air and into the Faces of those who Opposed them, and of some that did not so, thinking by this Clamour to divert the enquiry, and have their Schemes and Ballances stand as long and pass for good, as long as possible, for they cannot be so ignorant as not to know that they would be detected at last: But a Lie is always of some Service to them, because it often spreads farther than the Confutation of it may reach, and lasts some time before the Confutation of it can appear.

But the *Mercator* finding presently, that the said Custom-house Accounts were deficient, and that however they might be true so far as they reach'd, yet that they did not quite reach to the full of the whole Trade by a very great Sum, began to make a stated search into those parts of the Trade to France which the Custom-house took no cognizance of, that so the false treacherous Accounts of these Men might not only be detected, but that every one might see how the Trade really was carryed on, and might be able to draw out Accounts for themselves, which the *Mercator* thought was the equallest Method and the readiest way to come at a true state of the Trade to France.

In doing this, it presently occur'd that there vast and inconceivable Outlets of Trade, by which great Quantities of English Woollen Manufactures were sent to France which the Custom-house Books had no Account of.

Upon this discovery it was natural to infer as follows.

1. That all the Accounts already given were fraudulent and imperfect, and were only foisted in by a Parry to make a bluster against the French Trade, and Cheat the World.

2. That all the Ballances drawn from those Custom-house Books were partial and false.

3. That surely if so many of our Goods went daily to France, then it could not be true which these Men had so insolently affirm'd, viz. That the French made all their own Ma-

nufactures at home, and wanted none of ours.

4. That it could not be true, that the French could Underfell us in Woollen Manufactures in the Markets abroad, when it was apparent they could not do without our Manufactures in their own Markets at home.

These Observations were so Convincing, that Honest Men began to be amazed, began to look upon these Men to see what they would answer to these things, and when it comes to, they have nothing to say, but *Marseilles* is a free Port; which is so little to the purpose, that it perfectly exposes them, and makes their Case worse than it was before; for if it be a free Port, it is nothing at all to the purpose. For as the *Mercator* has fix'd the Goods at *Marseilles*, these Men can do nothing with them but what flies in their Faces in the Argument which is before us: They must go from *Marseilles*, that is certain, they cannot be Consumed in the City there, and if they were, still that is in France: If they go from thence it must be either into France or to some other Place for Sale: If to France, then what comes of the pretence that the French want none of our Goods: If to other Ports, then what comes of the pretence of the French supplying other Parts, and carrying the Trade away from us; whereas here they make the French turn Factors for us, and carry our Goods for us to foreign Markets, which they would never do, if they had any of their own to sell.

Thus every way this Argument is against them, and the Knavery of their former Conduct appears so naked, that it is no wonder that they care not to hear any more of it, and would fain call another Cause.

But as the telling these false and absurd Stories were of Service to them in the beginning of this Dispute, so they must be content that the Undeceiving of the Nation requires some time; and the *Mercator* must let People into this Secret a little, that they may not be served so a second time.

Upon the whole; It appears that all the Clamour at the French Trade has been raised upon these scandalous forged Pretences of Accounts, and of Ballances, which, as it is now plain, are all false, and not able to give a full Description of the Trade.

